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SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: LETTER FROM KUWAITI DETAINEE AT ABU GHARAIB AND
FATHER'S RESPONSE--ANGUISHED REASSURANCE OR COMMITMENT TO
JIHAD?

(U) SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED--PROTECT ACCORDINGLY

1. (U) Local Kuwaiti Arabic daily "Al Watan" published an article September 8 reporting excerpts of a letter from Abdarraahmane Al Badali, a Kuwaiti detained at Abu Gharaib prison in Iraq, and the response from Al Badali's father. The son's letter, poorly written in undereducated idiom, asserts in nonetheless fulsome religious language that "he has learned a lot in prison" and that one of his "Arab brothers" has proposed that he marry his sister, following this news with the words "I have changed my father, and don't worry about the path I have chosen." The father replies that his son's path is "filled with difficulties and thorns," that he should study the Quran and "apply it to your temporal world" and "pay no attention to those of us outside, for we are in a deep slumber."

2. In response to a query by PAO to a senior editor in Kuwait, the latter responded that the section of his newspaper that analyzes Islamic currents thought the letter might represent a kind of "code," in which the son, announcing his agreement to marry, was communicating to his family his intention to seek martyrdom or continuing his Jihadist "path of thorns," and receiving the desired benediction from his father. The contact said that the families of two Kuwaiti jihadis who died in Iraq were informed of their deaths by a message from extremists informing them of the "good news" that their sons had just gotten married. Post also notes that the father's use of the phrase "we are in a deep slumber" has been used several times by Osama bin Laden and other extremists in their calls to Muslims to take up Jihad.

3. While we have no idea if this poorly written correspondence suggests ongoing extremist intent on the part of Abdarraahman Badali or simply reflects a family's effort at mutual reassurance, there is certainly no indication of regret on the part of the son or his father for the presumably extremist activities that landed him in Abu Gharaib.

4. Post translation follows: 09/08/04 "Al Watan" Arabic daily, page 4:

"A detainee proposed that I marry his sister"

In a letter from Abu Ghraib to his father Albidali says:

"The path I have chosen is not easy.prison has taught me a lot"

Albidali's father: I am proud of you.and you are in a place to be envied.

"Family News Only"

"God's peace be upon you, father how are you. I hope you're fine, thanks be to Allah.

"I bring you the good news that I'm awaiting reward from almighty Allah for this plight that has befallen me as a result of sins, disobedience, scarce reading of the Koran, excessive chatting and laughter. O father, I have learned a lot in prison praise be to Allah. Please know father that this is all thanks to Allah and you. My reward goes to you my father. My father I love you in Allah. Please take care of my folks, my mother and sisters. Most importantly take care of the girls. Father, don't think I am young. They have arranged a marriage for me but right now it's an engagement."

The newspaper article:

"Citizen Abdarraahmane Badali who has been detained in AbuGhraib for months sent a letter to his family reassuring them "I bring you the good news that I'm counting only on Almighty Allah for my reward for this plight that has befallen me as a result of sins, disobedience, scarce reading of the Koran. I have learned a lot in prison praise be to Allah. Father, don't think I am too young. One of the Arab detainees proposed to me marriage to his sister. I

have changed, my father, and I need your prayers and don't worry about the path I have chosen. It is not easy. Be patient father as 'verily, with every difficulty there is relief'. Praise to Allah, I am with my Arab brothers who all send their greetings. Be reassured that I am well and don't forget me in your prayers.

"In the end of his letter, Abderrahman sends greetings to his mother telling her "I love you in God", followed by greetings to his sisters.

"Abderrahman's father replied saying: Don't worry O Abderrahman. This is a path filled with difficulties and thorns. Be one of those who take opportunities. Seize this opportunity and memorize the Koran and consult it in your temporal world. This is an opportunity that does not repeat itself. Don't pay attention to those outside for we are in a deep slumber. I declare that I am proud of you in this life and if God wills it in the after life.

"You must be patient Abderrahman. I am your witness in front of Allah. Don't omit me from your prayers as you are in a place for which you are envied. Spare no effort praying for me, yourself and your brothers. God willing we will meet one of these days and be one of those who consider difficulties and afflictions as blessings from God in order for you to get closer to God.

"Albidali senior concluded the letter saying "your mother, grandmother, brothers, uncles and their children are all sending their greetings and waiting for your return. Don't forget us in your prayers. Please do individual prayers (translator note: perhaps for each family member.) Do not forget to memorize the Koran. Persevere in reciting it. We shall meet in spite of all the oppressors and enemies God willing. I will not forget you no matter how long it will take.

"On the other hand, "Al Watan" contacted one of the UN Red Cross officers in Kuwait Mark Lening who said that Abderhman Albidali who is detained in Abu Ghraib is well and that the Red Cross workers in Iraq visit the detainees almost everyday to check on them.

"He added that he does not know whether Albidali will be released sooner or later as only authorities can decide that. He also affirmed that he has brought the matter to the authorities in Kuwait adding that the committee is not concerned with the release of Kuwaiti detainees or others. Authorities in both countries have that prerogative. He declared that a class of detainees will be released without trials, while others will go to court. He denied any knowledge about the status of Kuwaiti citizen Albadali reaffirming that the committee is neutral and is not entitled to interfere in such matters. "We only implement what the two parties in both countries agree on as far as transporting and delivering the released prisoners".

15. Baghdad minimize considered.

TUELLER